

February 24, 2018

Wilora Lake/Vernedale Glen

Hosted by City of Charlotte Housing & Neighborhood Services at

Goodwill Opportunity Campus

Wilora Lake/ Venedale Glen

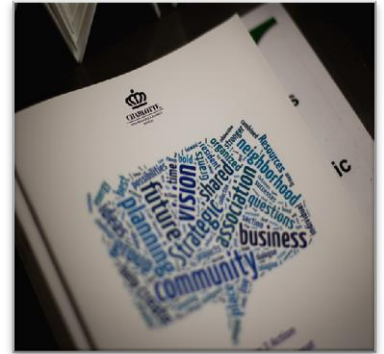
2018 Board Retreat

Background

On Saturday, February 24, 2018, the board members of the Wilora Lake/Venedale Glen participated in the Neighborhood Board Retreat facilitated by the City of Charlotte, hosted at the Goodwill Opportunity Campus. The following board members and/or community members participated in the retreat:

Margaret (Peggy) Major
Bobbi Almond
Susie Hines
John Bremer

Martin House
Cynthia Blackwell
Mary Hill



The City of Charlotte values citizen leadership and its ability to make an impact in the communities, in which we all live, work, play and shop. With this in mind, the board retreat process was initiated to help neighborhood based organizations develop strategic plans to improve quality of life in their communities.

Purpose

The purpose of the board retreat was to

- Generate meaningful conversations around improving quality of life in our community
- Set clear goals and priorities for the upcoming year(s)
- Develop a vision and strategic priorities for our community

By participating in the retreat, our board earned a \$1,500 match credit toward a Neighborhood Matching Grant (NMG) to help execute one of the projects we identified. More information on the grant program can be found online at <http://charlottenc.gov/nmg>.

To receive this credit we'll submit our completed Vision to Action Idea Development Plan Workbook with our NMG request. This credit will expire following the June 1, 2019 NMG application deadline.

Process

Our board retreat was conducted by trained facilitators tasked to keep our conversations on-task, productive, and focused on achievable objectives. The process was designed to help capture the best of the past, the best of the present, and how we can add to our strengths to build a better future. The focus was:

- Developing a vision to guide our decision making and activities
- Developing strategic priorities that aligned with our vision
- Developing project ideas

The agenda for the day was as follows:

- Introductions
- Where Have We Been? Where Are We Going?: Arrow Activity
- Where We Want to Be: Vision Statement Exercise
- Seeing the Forest through the Trees: Developing Strategic Priorities
- Working Lunch – The Year Ahead
- Idea Development – Time for participants for develop an action plan for goal achievement

Where Are We Going, Where Have We Been?

We began our day with paired interviews using the “Where Are We Going, Where Have We Been?” activity. The activity was intended to help us reflect on:

- What we value
- What are the best things about our community and the people who live here
- What are our past successes
- Where are the potentials and possibilities

After interviewing our partners we shared our discussion with the group, finding commonalities in our conversations.

Where We Were: Reflecting on our past, what were some of the best/worst moments?	Where We Are: Why would or wouldn't a person/business want to move into our community?	Where We Want to Be: If you could make 3 wishes to make our community flourish, what would they be?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eastside was a destination • There used to be a group called Charlotte East Community Partners that led many activities and brought many people together • Many opportunities for upward mobility • Resources were nearby • Thriving average middle income • Larger participation • First time homebuyers • Increased rentals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of economic opportunity • Lack of sidewalks and road maintenance • Cut through traffic • Dilapidated housing • Absentee landlords/homeowners • Group homes & transitional homes • Difficult communications with all residents • Needs for more accessible public transportation • Quiet and peaceful • Diverse neighbors • Respectful neighbors • Country/natural feel • Speeding cars • Great neighbors- wish they were more engaged 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighbors who work hard, value education, and beautiful maintained properties. • Positive resolution to Eastland mall • Stoplight at neighborhood entrance • Expand neighborhood to include other connected homes and streets • Local resources for neighborhood and bring in stores, businesses, stronger economy, a draw for people to visit.

Our Vision

Our vision is the unifying statement for our community that will guide our decision making and reminds us of what we are trying to reach. It is based on our shared values and preferences for our community's future. It combines the best of what was, what is, and what could be.

OUR VISION:

Wilora Lake/Vernedale Glen, an attractive inclusive place providing opportunities for a thriving community.

Strategic Priorities

After committing to a shared vision, the board began to brainstorm on strategic priorities. This is where we began to define what is most important to us in order to achieve our vision. Strategic priorities are initiatives that will help us move closer to our vision of our community. The idea is to focus on a few things and do them very well as opposed to many things and missing the mark.

We started out thinking big and then narrowed down our focus using the Affinity Mapping Process, detailed below:

- Grab some sticky notes from the table. Keeping the vision statement in mind, write down as many of the following as you can think of, one per sticky note:
 - Current action items getting you closer to our vision.
 - Possible priorities/actions items to get us closer to our vision.
- Place the sticky notes on the wall.
- Organize the ideas by natural categories, once everyone agrees on the groups, give each one a name.



This activity led us to the following categories and action items being identified as important within our community:

- Community Building
 - Spring Concert event
 - Tiny Library
 - More involvement from our neighbors
 - Neighborhood Watch
- Transport
 - Update for bus stops
 - Stop Signs
- Safety
 - Speed Limit Signs
 - More street lighting
 - Sidewalks
 - Neighborhood Signs
 - Sign toppers
 - Stop signs
 - Speed Bumps
- Beautification
 - Community Garden
 - Community Playground
 - Trees/bushes
 - Street lights
 - Connect to greenway
 - Trashcan
 - Art
 - Fundraiser yard sale
 - Parks
 - Benches
- Code Enforcement
 - Derelict properties addressed
 - Repair/replace Eastland Fence
- Eastland
 - Youth facility @ Eastland mall
 - Water park for kids/splash pad
 - Playground
 - Outside concert area
 - Swimming pool
 - Block party
 - Park
- Meetings/Communications
 - Reminder signs for meetings
 - Newsletter
 - T-shirts



Each participant was provided three (3) stickers to be used for voting. Stickers could be placed all on one or two items or shared amongst all of the ideas identified. The three categories receiving the most votes are the strategic priorities that are most important for us to begin working on to achieve our vision. Within these three categories, there were three activities selected as most impactful toward achieving our strategic priorities.

The strategic priorities and activities are summarized on the following page.

2018 Neighborhood Board Retreat Summary

Wilora Lake/Vernedale Glen

OUR VISION:

Wilora Lake/Vernedale Glen, an attractive inclusive place providing opportunities for a thriving community.

TO HELP US REACH OUR VISION; WE WILL FOCUS ON THREE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

1

Neighborhood Beautification

2

Community Building/
Communication

3

Safety

IN 2018-2019, WE WILL WORK ON THESE ACTIVITES GUIDED BY OUR PRIORITES:

Obtain a Neighborhood Matching Grant for Street Sign Toppers in 2018.

Discuss the sign toppers at March Neighborhood Meeting.
Martin & Susie will help write the grant.

Establish improved neighborhood communication channels in 2018.

Martin will establish connections to printers for March Meeting.
Martin will set-up Mail Chimp by March meeting.

Hold a community safety meeting in 2018 and establish ways to improve safety.

Bobbi will share past research & action about stop sign efforts by May 2018.
Peggy will convene partners for community Safety meeting.

Please list any parking lot items or additional activities beyond the initial 3 here.

- Information on Jobs- one of the attendees is a mentor for youth and would like to be connected with the Job fairs. (More information here: <http://charlottenc.gov/HNS/CE/Youth/Pages/Youth-Jobs.aspx>)
- Who should they talk with about repair/replacing/removing the Eastland fence
- How can they learn more about Eastland Mall updates (More information here: <http://charlottenc.gov/ED/Development/Pages/Eastland.aspx>)
- Want to learn more about housing requirements from code enforcement (More information here: <http://charlottenc.gov/HNS/Code/Pages/default.aspx>)
- What is the deceased homeowner process
- Want more information on Health code standards from DHS



Resources to Get Started- You've rolled up your sleeves and established your vision. We have compiled resources that may assist your organization in achieving your goals on our Neighborhood Training Programs and Resources [website](#). We have identified resource categories that may be applicable to your projects below; please do not hesitate to explore more categories as you undertake your work! Links and contact information are provided for information only and are subject to change.

Project	Potential Resource Categories of Interest
Obtain a Neighborhood Matching Grant for Street Sign Toppers in 2018.	Beautification
Establish improved neighborhood communication channels in 2018.	Communication
Hold a community safety meeting in 2018 and establish ways to improve safety.	Public Safety

Your community is located within Charlotte's Northeast Service Area. Your staff contacts for following up and community assistance are:

Charlenea Duncan, Northeast Community Engagement Liaison	John Short, Northeast Community Engagement Manager
csduncan@charlottenc.gov or 704-336-2173	jshort@charlottenc.gov or 704-336-3862

